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DC Kitchens's Rick Davis,  
A True Craftsman In Remodeling

Dialogue with a Designer:  
Cecilia Pacheco



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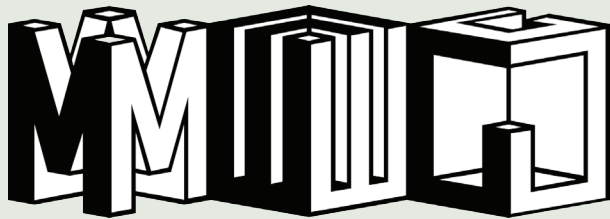
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# THE METROPOLITAN BUILDER

An Industry Trade Publication | November 2022



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Website  
www.themetropolitanbuilder.com

Printed in the USA  
by Seaway Printing

The Metropolitan Builder is a local trade publication published monthly in an informative and positive manner. Copies are mailed, free of charge, to building professionals throughout the greater Houston area. The opinions and facts expressed in The Metropolitan Builder magazine are those of the authors or columnist and do not necessarily reflect the views of the publisher, nor do they constitute an endorsement of products or services herein. The Metropolitan Builder strives to ensure the accuracy of the magazine's contents. However, should inaccuracies or omissions occur, we do not assume responsibility. The Metropolitan Builder reserves the right to refuse any advertisement. This publication may not be reproduced, in whole or in part, without the expressed prior written permission of the publisher.

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# Distinguishing Your Business from the Crowd

by Damon Wallace, Billionaire Thoughts

What makes your business unique? Over the years, I cannot tell you how many times I have asked business owners that question, and their reply almost always has the same handful of responses.



- **Our amazing customer service** – Imagine your competitors asking the above question, and their reply is: “the service is terrible!” Not likely. Outstanding customer service should be the expectation for anyone who patronizes a business. People have more options than ever to get the things they want or need.
- **We’re less expensive than our competitors** – This is often a losing proposition unless your business model is like Wal-Mart. Every day the costs of goods rise. Pushing to be the least expensive only reduces the margin requiring you to do more and more work for less money.
- **The quality of our work/service/product** – It is crucial for a business’s long-term success to have a quality product. This does not necessarily make you unique in the eyes of someone who has not experienced your quality yet.

There are variations in responses, but most answers come close or may be worded slightly differently. To create true distinction, you must be aware of the shift that has taken place in what consumers are looking for. Today, the things that companies once prided themselves on are more of a standard. Today, the focus must change to get through all the noise disguised as marketing.

*Here are a few ideas that will help you get to the core of what people want today:*

- **Connection** – In a world that is so highly connected, in a digital way, the loss of a genuine connection leads people to crave it. Your prospects will line up

to do business with you when you provide it and become raving fans.

- **Informative** – Be the top source of quality information for your prospects. They are going to do their research anyway. Would you rather them see you as the trusted advisor or one of your competitors?
  - **Reviews** – Once again, people are going to do their research, and your customer reviews are one of the fastest ways to build trust through the credibility of others.
  - **Alignment** – Quality and convenience are just par for the course. Customers want to support companies that align with their core values and beliefs. Don’t be afraid to communicate who you are and what you believe. Find your tribe and work diligently to build within it.
- Create a U.S.P., Unique Selling Proposition that takes all these things into consideration. Infuse that U.S.P. into your networking, marketing collateral, website, or anywhere else.

As a reader of Metropolitan Builders, the Billionaire Thoughts team is willing to offer your organization a complimentary review and feedback of your U.S.P.







# All Star Construction A Houston Remodeling Giant

By Mary Lynn Mabray, ASID

I was struck by the congenial environment that pervaded the offices of All Star Construction, as I waited to interview the three female principals of All Star Construction. This welcoming environment isn't by design; it is due to loyal family ties that Nikki Scherra, Angie Harper, and Ashlee Cutri, granddaughters of founders Hilda and Herb Haws, continue to keep alive.

They stoke the flames of "family" daily, and it shows in every employee and project managers' attitudes and completed projects.

All Star has been around since 1979, when their father, Dennis, now deceased, and uncle, Russell, currently president and CEO of All Star, joined forces with their

grandparents, Hilda and Herb Haws, in their real estate business, Red Carpet.

Dennis and Russell each had their own carpenter construction crews. It didn't take long before remodeling homes became a primary focus over real estate, and All Star Construction was born. If these three vivacious ladies have anything to do with it, All Star will continue to serve their residential remodel clients' needs for decades to come.

Currently, All Star Construction retains 13 project managers that oversee all remodels. At All Star, a project manager will stay with their individual remodel throughout the course of construction. The person that begins the job is the same person that will finish the job. Annually, the company will





After



Before



Before

complete approximately 150-250 remodels. That is a lot of work to oversee and ensure it's finished to every customer's satisfaction, but All Star does it with flying colors.

Herb Haws began work on the banks of the Mississippi at the young age of six. He caught and sold fish. With his fish cart, he made a daily trip to town, where he sold as many fish as he could catch. Whatever money he made was what fed his Family for the day. So, Herb was never a stranger to hard work.

Later in his life, he met and married a beautiful young girl named Hilda, and together, they tackled whatever life threw at them. The Family was always first; as I mentioned earlier,

*Continued on page 7*







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it still is today. Hilda's accounting system and how the business is managed is still maintained and followed forty-three years later by Nikki, Angie and Ashlee.

Every person who works at All Star practices and maintains a "step-up" work ethic. That sense of family integrity and loyalty extends to vendors, subs, and suppliers. Dennis Haws was famous for saying, "don't pass the porcupine." In other words, construction done right the first time is what he and his brother Russell thrived on.

All Star Construction is a design-build company with expertise in structural restoration and home additions. They also perform kitchen and bath remodels, conversions, patio covers, replacement windows, and siding, completing thousands of jobs in Greater Houston, including the Historic district. The company goes that extra step to ensure all projects are done right and with true enjoyment in helping maintain and showcase treasured landmarks in Houston that give this city its style and character. No problem is too hard to solve, as everyone at All Star Construction is encouraged to "think outside the box."

The company's success results from outstanding customer service, from consistently producing a well-built product and making it a good experience for all customers. They aim

to make the client happy while building a solid, beautiful project at a reasonable price. All Star project managers give each job their all because the company wants repeat business and loves "word of mouth" sales to new clients.

Every project manager uses their expertise and experience to provide quality control and results, open lines of communication, timely project completion, and cost reductions wherever possible.

Since All Star is a design-build company, they offer services that include financing, design, permit, and HOA approval (if needed), as well as building the project. All Star Construction is known for its professionalism, innovation, and creativity in improving homes. This approach drives All Star to blend the old and new seamlessly to allow a modern lifestyle to emerge.

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# DC Kitchens's Rick Davis, A True Craftsman In Remodeling

Rick Davis is the brain and inspiration behind DC Kitchens, one of Houston's premier full service remodeling companies. There is not a trade craft that he is not highly proficient in accomplishing from drafting drawings by hand to the actual design and the physical construction of all projects.

From kitchens, which are his specialty, to an entire household, baths, laundry rooms, bars, wine rooms or closets, master bedrooms, additions, selection of materials, design, architectural drawings, Rick does it all, top to bottom renovations or remodels, with the help of his highly skilled team. He is also happy to work with a client's architect and or builder to renovate the interiors.

Rick spends hours with the client, before any building or tear out begins. It is important to him that he understands the client's needs and wants. He does not impose his vision

but rather listens and comes up with a plan to give the client their dream. The most important thing to Rick and his team is that the client is happy. Rick is a very outgoing, affable man and an expert in his field.

All cabinets are built in his shop and finished in his shop and installed on the job, so measurements and finishes must be exact. Rick and team are quite adept at custom paint and stains. If you can dream it, Rick can mix it from the colors and stains that are "trending" to historical Old World finishes.

DC Kitchens is not just a construction company but also specializes in custom furniture, any size or style. Many clients have asked Rick to design and build bunk beds, entire master suite furnishings, and even a child's fort complete with sleeping quarters inside the bedroom.



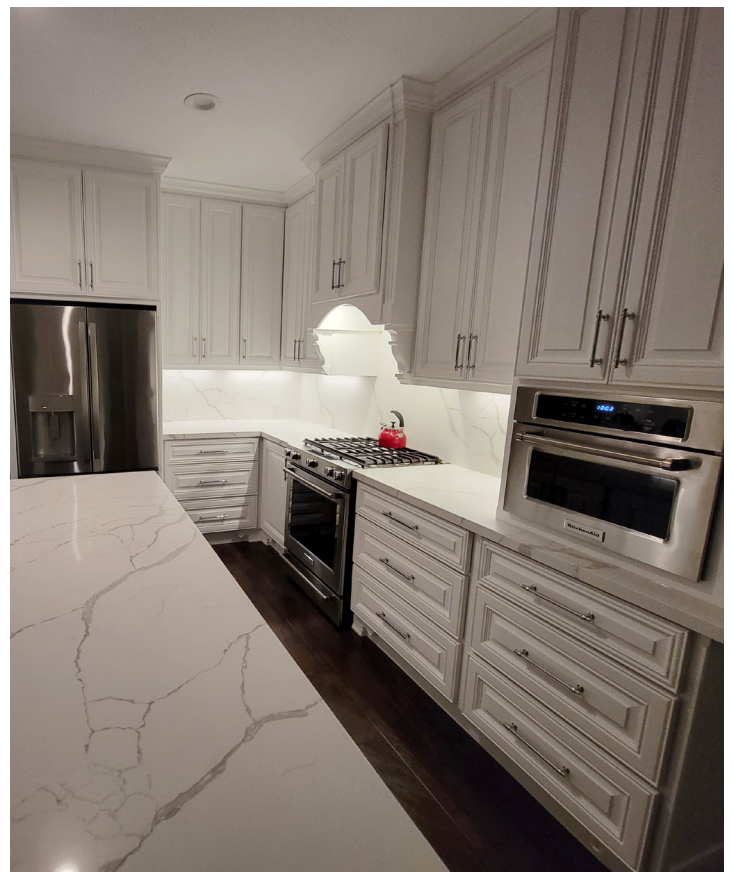


Rick is particular about the kinds of woods he uses. Their cabinets are constructed from European steamed beech, with various hardwood fronts, such as white oak, cherry and alder to name a few. The trend lately has been craftsman style doors. Rick likes to build solid wood insets on the panels of his cabinet doors, drawer fronts as well as panels. He believes that this style gives a space that extra bit of panache'. The interior of the cabinets are as well built as the exterior, solid wood, one half inch bottom, always dovetailed and UV coated with the DC Kitchen logo inside all cabinets.

DC Kitchens backs up their work with a one-year warranty on labor. They use high quality material including tile, grout, polymer modified adhesives, top of the line sheet rock and of course, wood. Their core value is customer service, integrity in keeping their word, and honesty in effective communication. In other words, the client can count on Rick and his team to do what they say and follow their agreement with the client. They take a great deal of pride in their work and the finished project.

As an entertainer lives for a performance, Rick lives for the final installation, the final touch. Nothing makes him

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# HIGH STYLE BEGINS HERE

## Find Beauty In Necessity With Understated Yet Elegant Home Essentials

By Linda Jennings

The journey to stylish living begins with today's most sought-after new products for kitchens, bathrooms and beyond. Transform current spaces by adding a space-saving tub, stunning oversized door hardware or an inspired kitchen sink and enjoy an inviting home. From new builds to renovations, it's all about the finishing touches and perfectly appointed fixtures and fittings.

And these products are proving to builders to be a solid purchase that will provide years of enjoyment and lasting design appeal. With a commitment to excellence, an allegiance to longevity, and the recognition that simplicity and elegance are the true hallmarks of any stylish living space.



Acquabella's Elko Bathtub

### A Modern Spin On The Traditional Japanese Bath

Inspired by the rich cultural traditions of the Japanese soaking bath, this extraordinary design is a freestanding tub that allows users to sink comfortably into a deep, satisfying bath. Acquabella honors the past and adds a modern twist with the Elko. Measuring 27" tall, this tub is generously sized to allow for total submersion, while its ergonomic shape gently cradles the body in utter comfort. The Elko has a compact design with a relatively small footprint, making it a smart choice for smaller bathrooms with limited floor space. The Elko is seamlessly sculpted from the brand's signature Dolotek, an eco-friendly mineral composite that forms a flawless, silky, smooth-to-the-tone finish. With an inherent ability to retain heat, Dolotek elevates the bath experience by helping to keep bathwater warm longer. Its antibacterial surface is amazingly durable and easy to maintain. Elko is generously sized at 55" x 31" and is available in available in Snow white (gloss or matte), Brown Matte, Light Grey Matte, Dark Grey Matte and Black Matte. Always with a Snow White interior.



Emtek's Door Pull through  
MyKnobs.com

### Dramatic Door Pulls

A memorable first impression starts at the front door, and Emtek, from MyKnobs.com provides ample opportunity to wow guests and enhance curb appeal with their stunning collection of long door pulls. And in this case, long means really long with four length options of 24", 36", 48" and 72". Sleek and tubular, these door pulls add definite drama to the entry and help to create a space that is both welcoming and distinctive.

The pulls are offered in round or square profile styles in a choice of beautiful finishes, including brushed or polished stainless steel, flat black and satin brass. Their newest matte gold finish is very on-trend and bring a fresh modern twist to already impressive hardware. Find them at MyKnobs.com, they offer free shipping on minimum orders, a flexible sample program and hassle-free returns.

### Sized To Fit

HamatUSA pairs two of today's hottest kitchen trends into one amazing look with their new Nero PVD Collection of workstations sinks in black stainless steel. Hamat fully equips their workstation sinks with a built-in sliding platform system and a selection of interchangeable accessories, including a beautiful hardwood cutting board as well as a multi-purpose roll-up mat, wire bottom grid and basket strainer in coordinating black PVD. At 30" in length, it is generously sized to accommodate the demands of both dinner parties and daily living. With its compact 15" x 15" basin, the Nero Prep/Bar workstation bar sink packs impressive practicality for any





**HamatUSA's Nero Black Stainless Steel Sink**

kitchen or entertainment area. An intermediate size 24.5" complimentary sink completes the collection. All models have spacious 9" deep basins, a luxurious satin finish and are made for undermount installations.

**Gem-Inspired Detailing**

The new Serie 230 collection from Isenberg is a true gem of brilliant design. Each faucet is enhanced with beautiful emerald cut detailing on the handles and at the base of the spout, adding a hint of glamour infuses a sense of elegance and luxury into the bathroom. The multi-dimensional surface easily catches the light for a bit of sparkle, while also providing a pleasing and substantive tactile experience. The Serie 230 faucet has gracefully arched spout that flows like the water it conveys and pairs perfectly with sleek lever handles. Each piece is finished according to the brand's exacting standards in a choice of chrome, matte black or satin brass.



**Isenberg Serie 230 Faucet**

*Discover these beautiful statement pieces ready to add a terrific dose of style to any decor! To find out more about the hardware and fixture products mentioned here, visit their websites:*

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# Dialogue with a Designer

## Cecilia Pacheco

*BATHS OF AMERICA opened its doors in January 2005 when brothers Ali and Zeeshan Sultanali decided to start selling plumbing and tiles to the Houston market. Baths of America focuses on customer service and partners only with brands offering quality products and customer service. In addition to plumbing, Baths of America now offers door and cabinet hardware, major appliances, cabinetry, and countertops. It has turned into a one-stop shop for designers, builders, and architects, offering the latest designs and trends in the market.*

*This month BATHS OF AMERICA speaks with Cecilia Pacheco, ASID, RID, CAPS, founder of Cecilia Pacheco Interior Design, designing spaces that support wellness, safety, and beauty and create a comfortable, sophisticated, and timeless atmosphere where you feel invigorated daily. With thoughtful planning and attention to detail, she develops creative solutions to achieve the vision of a home that meets and exceeds your expectations, where you feel joyful and at ease. Cecilia partners with architects, lighting designers, and the finest artisans to craft your home around what you love and to complement everything about you. Born in Colombia, her broad influences come from living in Venezuela, Peru, and the USA in Wilton, Ct. and Houston, Texas.*

**BATHS OF AMERICA:** *What motivated you to enter interior design?*

**Cecilia Pacheco:** The lessons I have learned from moving several times in my life. With every move, I had to transform the new house and accommodate all my family's needs so we could have a great time together and make the new place special. This inspired me to pursue a degree in interior design.

**BATHS OF AMERICA:** *How has the field of interior design changed since you graduated?*

**Cecilia Pacheco:** I graduated in 1990. Since then, technology and communications have made our lives easier. Also, we have many optional sustainable products and numerous ways to enhance our client's quality of life and well-being.

**BATHS OF AMERICA:** *How can an experienced interior designer help a custom home builder or a remodeling contractor with their building or remodeling projects?*

**Cecilia Pacheco:** An experienced interior designer brings creativity and attention to detail to a project and helps to select all materials and finishes. We also help to run the projects on schedule.

**BATHS OF AMERICA:** *What sets you apart from other*





designers?

**Cecilia Pacheco:** My life experiences significantly influence how I approach any project. Having an open mind and listening to my clients make them feel at ease while working with me.

**BATHS OF AMERICA:** *What has been your most challenging project and why?*

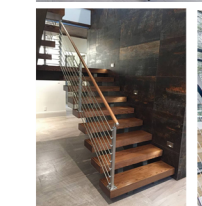
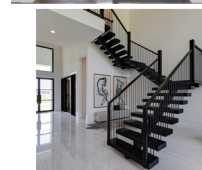
**Cecilia Pacheco:** I believe every project presents its challenges. However, clarity in addressing any issue immediately, collaboration at all stages, and offering alternatives are essential to overcoming any problem.

**BATHS OF AMERICA:** *How do you begin the materials selection process when working with builders' and remodelers' clients?*

**Cecilia Pacheco:** I carefully analyze their points of view. What they want to create, their goals, their values, and what is appropriate for them in every specific situation, including safety, functionality, budget, and style.

**BATHS OF AMERICA:** *What are some common mistakes made by builders and homeowners?*

**Cecilia Pacheco:** They should be clear on the scope of



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work and have a realistic budget.

**BATHS OF AMERICA: Speaking about staying current, how do you keep yourself up to date with all the design trends happening in the industry today?**

**Cecilia Pacheco:** We are constantly immersed in finding new ideas that bring value to our clients. Courses and attending trade shows help to keep our quality of design spaces focused on meeting our client's expectations. I also love traveling to get inspiration and ideas from different places.

**BATHS OF AMERICA: What is your favorite design style?**

**Cecilia Pacheco:** I prefer rooms that are not crowded. It doesn't matter the style. It can be contemporary, eclectic, or traditional, as long as the pieces have meaning to my clients. My goal always is to design spaces that show my clients' uniqueness.

**BATHS OF AMERICA: What fascinates you, and how have you incorporated that into your designs?**

**Cecilia Pacheco:** I appreciate fine craftsmanship and love incorporating quality pieces into my design spaces to make them distinctive and timeless. I am fascinated with good architecture, and adding art pieces is imperative to give a wonderful touch to any room.

**BATHS OF AMERICA: How would you characterize your personal style?**

**Cecilia Pacheco:** Elegant, Simple, and Tasteful.

**BATHS OF AMERICA: What would be your recommendation for "what to do first" in a decorating project when working with the builders and/or homeowners?**

**Cecilia Pacheco:** I like to find a focal point and develop a design around it to create a harmonious space.

**BATHS OF AMERICA: How do you keep yourself up to date with current design trends in the market? Repeat from above**

**Cecilia Pacheco:** Seminars, trade shows, and events keep us updated on the construction and design market.

I look forward to hearing about your design needs and working with you.

*For more information, please contact:*

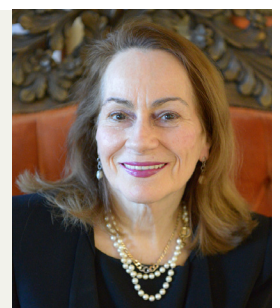
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happier than to see a smile on his client's face and to hear words of appreciation for a job well done.

In his spare time, which isn't a lot, Rick loves to cook for his family of four kids and eight grandchildren. He is quite the gourmet cook and it isn't unusual to see food pictures posted on his website or Facebook page.



*You can follow DC Kitchens on Facebook to see DC Kitchens outstanding work or reach Rick at 281-793-8288.*



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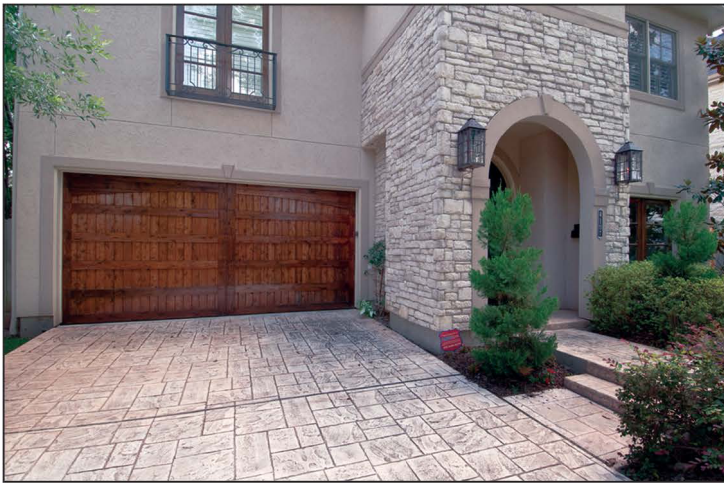
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